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SOCIALISM FOR THE  
FARMER WHO FARMS THE  
FARM



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# Socialism For The Farmer

WHO FARMS THE FARM



By OSCAR AMERINGER,

Author of "SOCIALISM, WHAT IT IS AND  
HOW TO GET IT," "LIFE AND DEEDS OF  
UNCLE SAM; A LITTLE HISTORY FOR  
BIG CHILDREN".

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# Oscar Ameringer

The Author of this Pamphlet is one of the Editors of the  
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Mr. Ameringer's timely articles appear in each issue of the magazine, and in addition each and every issue contains articles and editorials by Eugene V. Debs, W. S. Morgan, H. M. Tichenor, and Kate Richards O'Hare, constituting the most brilliant staff of writers gathered together on any journal in the English-speaking world.

**The Rip-Saw** was founded in 1904, and now has a circulation of 200,000 copies monthly, extending throughout the length and breadth of the American continent. This great circulation was secured solely through the volunteer work of those who like the magazine, working without salaries or commissions. The Rip-Saw is unique in the journalistic field. It follows a revolutionary policy, written in language for the average reader.

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## INTRODUCTION.

This booklet is written for the farmer who farms the farm. That is, the actual tiller of the soil. The man who works eight hours in the morning and eight in the afternoon that mankind may be fed and clothed. The Socialist movement is not concerned with the farmer who farms the farmer. There are lawyers, doctors, bankers and merchants who own farms. Then there are the retired farmers who moved to town to die and then forgot why they moved to town. All these people are no farmers but exploiters of labor. They live off the farmer who farms the farm. They are parasites as much as our idle rich, only on a smaller scale.

The author has often been asked, "After a man has worked hard all his life and saved his money and bought a farm to have something to live on in his old age, would you Socialists take it away from him?" To this question we answer: "If that farmer had received the full product of his labor during his producing years he could retire to well-earned rest, on the accumulations of his own labor. As it is, he lives on the fruit of some one else's labor." We also may ask in return, "If a man worked hard all his life on a rented farm and paid one-third or one-half of the crop to the landlord, what are you going to do with him after he becomes too old to work?"

We may add further that we don't expect the beneficiaries of the capitalist system to voluntarily relinquish their soft snap. In fact they would be very foolish in doing this, especially so since the victims of the system are still willing to support it with their votes. So we say to the farmer who farms the farmer, "personally we do not blame you for exploiting the renter any more than we blame the chicken for eating worms or the hawk for devouring the chickens. As long as the landless who even now are in the over-whelming majority are willing to pay you for the use of God's earth, you would be a fool not to take all you can. Only we want to serve notice that some day the majority will wake up and then you'll join the one time highly respected Robber Barons and the Feudal Lords."

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# Socialism for the Farmer

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## THE SAD STORY OF THE SLAMERICANS.

Once upon a time there was a great island named Slamerica. It laid two hundred miles beyond Christmas and on the left side of New Year. Its inhabitants called themselves Slamericans. The island was divided by a wide and turbulent river. On one side of the river lived the Slamericans who raised food; on the other side those who made clothing. The river was spanned by a bridge belonging to a fat man named Ploot.

Now it so happened that the Slamerican food raisers could not live without clothing, while the clothing makers could not live without food. This being the case, one would think that these people simply exchanged the products of their labor, clothes for food, and food for clothes, but they didn't.

Whenever a food raiser wanted clothing to cover his nakedness he would fetch a pig to the owner of the bridge and speak thusly: "Oh! mighty Ploot, Lord of Spondulix and Captain of Iron Wheels, behold thy servant and take pity upon him. The seat of my breeches has gone to naught and the seam of my garment has frazzled to frazzles. My elbows peep through the sleeves and cry for covering. Mighty Lord, I pray of thee give me spondulix for this porker that I may purchase garments for my nakedness."

Thereupon Ploot would consult a chart of information which he had made for himself this very morning, and spake also: "The market price of pigs is five plunks to-day; here are the plunks."

Then the food raiser would tear his hair and smite his chest and cry in loud tones: "I am robbed, hornswaggled and flimflammed out of this noble porker which I have slopped, fed and nursed with more diligence and care than I have expended upon the children of my own bosom. Five plunks! oh! my eyes! Five plunks—have mercy upon me!"

But Ploot only smole a smile and jingled the silver plunks in his fat paw.

While the food raiser thus wailed and wept a chilly breeze stole out of the icebergs on the north pole and crawled through the holes of his garments and he made a frantic grab for the five plunks. "Now," he muttered, "let me have a garment."



"Go easy," replied Ploot, "I am not in business for the fun of it. This bridge cost oodles of spondulix. Am I not entitled to a reward for my abstinence for not having eaten this bridge? Besides the land on which these pillars rest belongs to me and surely I ought to have some rent for the use of it. Then too I must have a little profit on my investment in this clothing stock. Therefore go hence and fetch me three more pigs.

"One for interest,

"One for rent, and,

"One for profit."

The food raiser departed with a sorely puzzled mind to do as he was told.

From the other side of the river approached a garment maker with a new suit of clothes slung over his arm. As soon as he spied the fat man on the bridge he cried, "My stomach is as empty as a summer resort in January. It growls until the echoes reverberate on the walls. Have mercy upon me and give me a porker to still the voice in my innards. O! mighty Ploot, take this garment and give me food."

Thereupon the Ploot handed to the garment maker five plunks and bade him to return and fetch three more garments. The poor worker looked flabbergasted at this, but Ploot only said:

"One for interest,

"One for rent, and

"One for profit."

The garment man was too hungry to argue the case, so he took himself hence to do as he was told.

When the food raiser and garment worker returned next day, the one with three pigs and the other with three suits of clothes, Ploot gave each one fifteen shining plunks. Then he sold the pig to the hungry tailor for twenty plunks and the suit of clothing to the shivering food raiser for the same sum.

These were prosperous times and business was brisk. The two workers had earned twenty plunks apiece. One departed with a pig, and the other with a new suit. Both were happy and so was Ploot, for he had not only gotten all his money back but three suits of clothes and three pigs in the bargain.

All the Slamericans went through the same transaction every time they needed food and clothing and so it happened that Ploot often got more than he could eat or wear. At such times he would lock the gates to the bridge and hang out a sign saying, "Closed on account of over production." But the

great and wise ones among the Slamericans called it a panic and explained to the people that over production of food was the prime cause of starvation, while too much clothing was the cause of the nakedness in the world.

One day a crank came among these people and said, "Let us build a bridge of our own and do away with Ploot who charges us interest for money he took away from us, who makes us pay rent for land which the Creator made for all, and who demands of us profit for being in our way. With a bridge of our own we can exchange pig for garment and garment for pig instead of paying four pigs for one garment and four garments for one pig." When Ploot heard this he called the Slamericans together and spake: "Harken unto me. This man would drive capital out of the country. Do I not give you work? By allowing you to make four suits for one pig and to raise four pigs for one suit, do I not give employment to you, your wife and children? If, as this agitator saith, a pig could be swapped for a suit and a suit for a pig, then you would be out of work three-fourths of the time. Does not the holy book say, "in the sweat of thy brow thou shalt eat bread?" Who gives you an opportunity to sweat? It's me. This man would rob you of the incentive to work. He would destroy the Gods and steal your wives. Stone him, hang him!"

And when the people heard Ploot say all this they tied a millstone around the neck of the crank and sunk him to the bottom of the river.

### TWO MEN SKINNED ALIVE.

Brother farmer, do you recognize yourself in this picture? Maybe not, but the capitalist system works, and works you, exactly like it. Only it's more complicated. But have you ever noticed that when you haul wheat, corn or cotton to town you never say to the buyer, "I want so much." You always say, "How much will you pay?" And when you buy goods in the store, you don't say, "I give so much," but you inquire, "How much does it cost?" You do not set the price of the things you sell, or the price of the things you buy. And since the people to whom you sell and from whom you buy are in the business for profit they pay you as little as they can and charge you as much as you can stand.

Did you ever take a drove of hogs to town and then eat store cheese and crackers for dinner because you did not feel that you could afford a pork chop in the "short order" restaurant?

Did you ever escort a carload of export steers to Chicago and then eat oxtail soup and beef tongue in the cheapest hash

joint in Packingtown just to make both ends "meat?"

Did you ever haul a ton of sugar beets to the refinery and your wife hauled the sugar she bought with the six dollars you received for the ton of 15 per cent beets home under the buggy seat?

Did you ever sell a barrel of apples for one dollar and then throw a double decked fit when the "news butch" on the "Cannon Ball" soaks you a nickel apiece?

Did you ever sell a heifer, horn, hoof, hide and tallow and all and then buy back the tanned hide for more money than you got for the whole beast?

Most likely you did and blamed it on the tariff, or the gold standard or those pesky "Labor union fellers" in town who do nothing but strike for more wages and who make the price of every blamed thing go clear out of sight.

But you're wrong. It's not the tariff or the gold standard or the Labor Unions that cause the trouble. It's the capitalist system. It's the man on the bridge between you and the city laborer.

That fellow pays you for a basket of grapes two cents, while the worker in town is soaked 40 cents for the same. That's an increase of 2000 per cent. Now you understand why that City worker howls for more wages.

The buyers pay 35 cents for potatoes in Waupacca, Wis., and the people of Milwaukee, only a hundred miles away, pay \$1.50. This is an increase of 300 per cent of which only about 30 per cent went to freight and handling.

The farmer feeds the calf until it has grown into a cow. Then he feeds the cow, milks the cow, hauls the milk to the station and pays the freight to the city. For all this he gets four cents a quart. While the milk company for delivering the milk from the depot to the consumer gets an equal amount.

Asparagus; price paid to the farmer 8c; cost in the city 35c; an increase of 400 per cent.

Tomatoes \$2.00 for a 24 pound crate or 8c per pound; cost in the city 25c per pound; advance 300 per cent.

Wheat, for which the farmer received one dollar per bushel, when converted into breakfast cereal, sells for 15 cents per pound or \$9.00 per bushel, and the steer for which the farmer received \$55.00 on the hoof, figured on the basis of prices paid in swell restaurants, runs up to about \$2000. That is, the city man pays as much for the steer as the farm on which he was raised is mortgaged for.

Yes, brother Farmer, you sell cheap enough and the city man pays high enough, but the benefit of high prices for farm products in the city go not to you and the low cost of farm products in the country are of no earthly benefit to the city man. The difference is swallowed up by the numerous fat men on the many bridges that stand between producer and consumer.

Since the farmer has no control over the price of his products his income is determined by people who have all the interest in the world to see him get along with as little as possible.

### WAGES OF THE FARMERS.

Why don't people go back to the soil? Why do they persist in living in crowded, noisy tenements instead of going back to the country where they can hear the song of the meadow lark, inhale God's fresh air and drink fresh spring water?

Well, there is nothing wrong with the warble of the meadow lark. Fresh air and good water are plentiful enough in the country, and if farmers could exchange the notes of the meadow lark with the notes held by the bankers, or buy cultivators and manure spreaders with hunks of fresh air or buckets of cool spring water, life in the country would be one sweet old song. But the fact is the farmer holds a monopoly on the hardest way of making a living ever invented. He works longer hours than the city worker and gets less pay. People who are continually harping about the desirability of life on the farm may do well to study the figures compiled by Uncle Sam.

#### Farm incomes.

Under \$250.00 per year .....	31.9 per cent
From \$250.00 to \$500 per year .....	27.9 per cent
From \$500.00 to \$1000 per year .....	24.0 per cent
From \$1000.00 to \$2500 per year .....	14.5 per cent

Out of this princely income the farmer pays taxes, interest, insurance, pays for fertilizers, machinery, tools, repairs and in the case of the 17 per cent of farms where the income is \$1000.00 and over, a goodly amount goes in wages for farm hands. From these figures it may easily be seen that the farmer is even closer to the minimum of subsistence than the wage worker.

Says A. M. Simons in his very able book, "The American Farmer:" "When it comes to amount of income, all authorities agree that the farmers and the wage workers are alike in receiving little more than a subsistence wage." Prof. C. P. Walker in a discussion before the American Economic Asso-



ciation made the following statement: "By using all available statistics, it becomes evident that, deducting rent and interest, the American farmer receives less for his exertion than does the laborer in factory or the hired man on the farm." Prof. L. B. Bailey of the Department of Agriculture in Cornell University, and one of the foremost authorities on agriculture in this country, declared that the "\$200.00 a year income farmer is the ideal in American farming." Geo. G. Holmes, Assistant Statistician of the United States Department of Agriculture, in an analysis of the statistics for 1891, gives as his conclusion: "It appears that if you allow interest to the farmers on the farm capital, they earn substantially no wages. On the other hand, if you allow them no interest, they receive \$22.61 per month as wages."

This gives a farmer a chance to feel either as a capitalist or as a wageworker. As a capitalist he gets \$22.61 per month interest on his investment and works for nothing; while as a wage worker he loses the interest on his money and gets \$22.61 per month wages. So we see that as far as incomes are concerned wage workers and farmers find themselves in the same boat. And the reason that neither of them gets much more or less than is necessary to keep themselves in working condition and to raise a new crop of workers is that neither the wage worker or the farmer own the implements of production. The process by which the workers become separated from the means of production will be explained in the next chapter. It will be rather dry reading, but people who get skinned ought to know at least how it is done. Finding out the reason why after all is not nearly as painful as the skinning process itself.

### THE DECAY OF PRIVATE PROPERTY.

Within the last century a great change has taken place in the relation of men to property. A hundred years ago nearly every craftsman owned the tools with which he worked. Production was carried on privately and the private ownership of the tool insured to the user the product of his labor. This relationship although just from the viewpoint of distribution, because it gave to the owner the product of his toil, was inferior as a means of production to the system which replaced it.

As the tool was merged into the machine and the machine into the great factory, there evolved a wonderful organism, operated by many laborers working together, that is, co-operatively. But while we developed co-operative or social production, we still retained the private ownership of the means of

production. The handworker could not compete with the machine so he was forced to forsake his little shop and accept employment in the factory. The modern factory can be owned by one man, or at least by a very few people, but must be operated by many. Those who own the plant do not use the machinery and those who use it do not own it. Thus came about the separation between ownership and labor and the division of modern society into two hostile camps—capitalist on the one side and workers on the other.

Social production is now carried on for private profit. The instrument of labor becomes the means of exploitation. The product of the modern tool still goes to its owner, but this owner is a working man no longer, but a coupon-clipping, dividend-chasing capitalist. He may not have the slightest technical knowledge of the industry in which he has his money invested. The management and operation is entrusted to salaried employees who have no financial interest in the concern.

The individual trade is decomposed and specialized. Instead of one worker producing a pair of shoes all by himself, he performs only one single act in a long and complicated series. He not only lost the tools of his trade, but often the trade itself and he becomes more and more dependent on the owning class.

Specialization and co-operation with the help of machinery greatly increases the productive power of labor, but this increased productivity does not benefit the worker. His wages are not determined by the value of the product, but by the amount of money required to keep him in working condition. The dissolution of the union between ownership and labor brought untold misery to the toiling masses. But this painful transformation is but the birth-pain of a better day. The socialization of production will be followed by the social ownership of the means of production, thereby establishing on a high plane the union between ownership and labor.

Capitalism itself is developing the conditions for a society where Capital and Labor are one.

### THE OLD FARM.

The farm of two generations ago was a productive unit. The family produced what it consumed and consumed what it produced. What little co-operation existed was carried on between the members of the family. The men folks produced the raw product in the field and the women prepared it for final consumption in the home. Grandmother was not only a housewife, but a candle and soap maker, she canned fruit,



made sugar, packed pork, dried beef, wove cloth and made clothing.

What little furniture and implements they had were usually home made. The blacksmith, the miller and the shoe cobbler were about the only artisans called upon outside the home, and these were usually paid in produce instead of in money. If there was a house to be erected they called upon the neighbors for help, and the old time "log raising" was regarded in the light of a holiday. Tobacco was raised, cured and smoked by the men folks on the place. Corn was easily transformed into whiskey and still easier consumed. If there was a bigger corn crop than the family could harvest, a husking bee was arranged, followed by a dance of the young folks on the barn floor.

Grandfather had few luxuries, but he made a living and raised a dozen or so of children. He was economically and politically a free man. Being dependent on none he did not care a continental who knew when he voted for "Tippecanoe and Tyler too."

The cradle of American democracy stood on the independent farm of the first half of the last century. Free soil and freedom cannot be separated, economic independence and political liberty go ever hand in hand.

The invention of the power loom made hand weaving unprofitable; the spinning wheel became a plaything for the children and the weaving industry moved to the towns. Soap factories making soap that floats and soap that sinks, soon relegated the soap kettle to the scrap pile. The oil refinery put an end to the candle mould. Armour absorbed the meat packing industry. Havemeyer assimilated the sugar making business. The whiskey trust manufactured booze, and Duke, by discovering a process which makes alfalfa hay smell almost like tobacco, put an end to the Dog Leg and Granger Twist industry of the farmers.

The farmer trade too, became decomposed and specialized. One industry after the other left the farm until the farmer finds himself a specialist, raising a few products, not for home consumption but for sale.

### THE MODERN FARM.

As soon as the farmer produced for sale instead of for home use, his independence ceased and he became dependent upon the great and unknown market. Without organization to regulate production, with no knowledge as to how much of his products the market demanded, he produced blindly,

hoping that somewhere, sometime, somebody would pay him something for the fruit of his toil.

So long as the unorganized farmers dealt with unorganized buyers, the prices of farm products were determined by the law of supply and demand. But when the industries in which farm products are prepared for final consumption became trustified, a small and powerful clique of trust magnates set the price of farm products within certain limitations.

In order that a farmer may be able to raise crops he must have food, clothing, shelter, tools and animals. Should his income fall below the point where he can no longer acquire these necessities, he must cease to produce. By pauperizing the farmers completely the trusts would kill the goose that lays the golden egg, and so it may be said that in the long run the income of the farmer is determined by what it costs to keep him alive and in working condition, while he works for the trusts.

### HOW THE FARMER IS SKINNED.

No commodity is produced until it has reached the consumer. A hog has no value to the consumer until he is converted into ham, bacon, pork chops, tenderloin, and pickled pig's feet. To prepare the hog for consumption, railroads, packing plants, refrigerator cars and market facilities are required. But these industries and facilities belong not to the farmer, but to the capitalist. The farmer owns the hog, and the hog has no value as food as long as he is a hog; hence the hog must be sold to the capitalist who owns the pork machinery. The capitalist is in business for profit and profit is the difference between the cost of production and the selling price of a thing. It is to the interest of the capitalist to buy cheap and sell high, while it is to the interest of the farmer to sell high and buy cheap.

If the farmer could reach the consumer directly he would charge all he could get, but this pleasure is taken from him by the owner of the hog converting machine, who sets the price of hogs to the farmer and the price of pork to the consumer.

When the farmer is both producer and consumer he gets it going and coming. In the latter case he often sells the whole hog for less money than it costs him to buy back one lower side of the swine.

The hog raiser is dependent on the market. He no more sets the price on his hog than the wage worker in the pork factory sets the price on his labor power. The ownership of the pork industry gives to the owners of the hog a price that

will feed and clothe the hog raiser while he raises the hog. Time has been when the price of hogs was set too low by the meat trust, then the half starved hog raisers quit raising hogs and the price had to be raised again to induce the farmers to return to the hog industry. Prices rise and prices fall, but on an average the farmer gets a bare living while the hog and pork manufacturers grow fat.

### THE CATTLEMAN.

Tradition tells us that the cow man is the free born son of the boundless plain. A hale fellow well met, a happy-go-lucky kind of a chap. Independent—should say so; free man—no word for it.

Now let us see how things stand with the cow man. A steer has no value as long as it is a steer. Cattle raised in Texas are converted into beef in Kansas City or Chicago, and consumed as porterhouse or soup meat in New York, Berlin or Paris.

The ranch and the steer belong to the cattleman. To finish a steer for the market requires corn, and corn costs money. Like most farmers, the cow man is usually long on expectation and short on coin. So he borrows the money from the commission house at a more or less unreasonable rate of interest. To secure the commission house he mortgages the steers and agrees to deliver them at the stock yards any time the commission house may request it. He cannot take advantage, if there is such a thing, of a favorable market, but must deliver when told to.

But let us assume that our free-born cattleman is independent of the commission house. He takes his cattle to the Kansas City Stockyards. This institution is controlled by the meat trust. Every morning the different firms composing this organization agree on the maximum price of cattle. Let us say this price is five cents per pound. There is still competition in the stock yard; every buyer tries to buy steers for less than five cents. It is a kind of Dutch auction, where the buyers beat the price down instead of up.

If your cattleman does not want to accept the top notch price of five cents, he may keep his steer in the stock yards by paying certain reasonable charges. He also may purchase feed for his animals at a figure usually charged the two-legged cattle at the Waldorf-Astoria or the St. Regis. In a short time the cattle eat their heads off. Our freeborn son of the prairie may have to sell them for less than he was offered in the first place and pay the board bill besides.

If he refuses to sell at five cents per pound in Kansas City, he may reload his stock and ship it to the Chicago Stock Yards, belonging to the same trust, and sell them for a nickle per pound. By the time he has deducted feed bills and additional transportation charges, he can be glad that his cattle pass entitles him to a return trip home.

The cattle man is only the owner of the first few links in the chain of production. The ownership of land and cattle does not prevent his exploitation by the Armours, Swifts and Sulzbergers, who own the packing houses and the market facilities. On his way to the consumer he finds his road blocked by the capitalist owner of the greater means of production, who says, "Stand and deliver."

Sometimes cattle are high and sometimes low. Some cattlemen make money, others go into bankruptcy. But on an average the cow man receives enough for his stock to keep him alive and in working condition to raise more steers for the meat trust.

### PICKING THE COTTON PICKER.

King Cotton, Queen Poverty, Prime Minister Hunger and Court Chaplain Ignorance rule the cotton states.

Cotton is the devil's own crop. It takes thirteen months out of the twelve and all the children out of school to raise a cotton crop.

Raw cotton on the farm has no more value than ice on the North Pole. To prepare cotton for the consumer it must go through

THE GIN,  
THE COMPRESS,  
over  
THE RAILROAD,  
through  
THE COTTON MILL  
THE CLOTHING FACTORY  
and  
THE STORE.

The cotton raiser may be the proud owner of land, mules, implements, cotton bags, and children, but the cotton gin, the compress, the railroad, the cotton mill, the clothing factory and the store belong to Mr. Capitalist, and this gentleman sets the price of cotton and regulates the price of clothing. The result is that the cotton raiser's family, who produce enough cotton in one season to clothe themselves for a life time, are forced to dress in rags and shoddy. In a pinch the hog raiser may eat his own hog. The wheat farmer can take his wheat



to the flour mill and have it ground, and if his wife hasn't forgotten how to bake, he may eat the bread. But raw cotton, cannot be worn, eaten, or used as fuel; therefore no other class of farmers are more dependent upon the capitalist class than the cotton raiser.

It is claimed that the cotton raisers suffer greatly from the hook worm, but it is hard to believe that even a hook worm can make a living out of the cotton raiser after the capitalists get through with him.

Suppose you own a fiddle and I own the bow. How much music will you make? Suppose you own the well and I own the pump. How much water can you get? Even a free owned farm with all its implements, animals and machines form only the first link in a long chain of production. Those who own the other links between the farmer and the consumer determine the wages and the mode of living of the farmer as effectively as the owner of the factory determines the wages of his employees.

But not all the farmers own even the first link of this chain. The farm land itself is gradually slipping away from the farmer. It may be well for some people to point to the automobiles and carriages as sure signs of prosperity among the farmers, but as long as it can be shown that the farmer is losing the very foundation on which he rests; if it can be shown that mother earth itself is becoming capitalist property—that is, a means of exploitation—then all this prosperity talk is idle wind. A farmer without land is a good deal like a fish without water, and so it may be well to give a little study to the land question.

### THE LAND QUESTION.

The private ownership of land has been condemned by every thinker and prophet from Moses to Herbert Spencer, Karl Marx and Henry George. Even God has declared himself in favor of the common ownership of land when he said: "You are strangers and sojourners on this earth. And the land shall not be sold forever, for the land is mine." For many centuries the Jews heeded the divine injunction and divided the land every fiftieth year among the children of Israel. But in the course of time real estate agents and land boomers settled among them. The common land of God's children became the private property of the few, and the many found themselves landless. Thereupon God waxed wroth, as they used to say when a person got huffy, and he said to his chosen people, "Woe unto you, for you have built house on

house and laid field on field until you dwell as strangers in the land of your own."

From all this it may be seen that the Heavenly Father was bitterly opposed to the landlord, and the language in which he condemned the private ownership of land was plain enough and strong enough for most people to understand. So strong, in fact, that if a modern preacher repeated the utterances of the Lord on the land question before a congregation of Christian landlords he most likely would lose his job.

The Old Testament is rather hard on the private ownership of the land and the New Testament holds still less consolation to the landlord.

### THE STORY OF MR. ANANIAS.

Long before the war there lived a man in the Holy Land by the name of Ananias. This man must have been a great admirer of Theodore Roosevelt, for the latter named many of his friends after him. About that time Christianity got started, and Mr. Ananias, who was somewhat of a progressive, concluded to join the new party. Now, these early Christians were a queer set, and nothing like them has ever been seen again in Christendom. In the first place, they believed in dividing up, going even so far as advocating the common ownership of clothing. "We hold everything in common except our wives," said one of them. At meal time they assembled around the common table. Everyone brought all he had to the table, and if the fellow who fetched the least eat the most no one raised a kick. This looked mighty good to Mr. Ananias and he decided to get in on the ground floor.

Now, the by-laws of the organization stipulated that those who had land must sell it and bring the proceeds thereof to the common table. Well, this Ananias man owned a good farm in Palestine County, and he sold it. But when it came to fetching the money to his Christian brothers he hedged. "No one knows how much I got for my farm except the man who bought it, and I told him to keep mum," said Ananias to himself. So he knocked down some of the money.

But it appears that St. Peter, the chairman of the meeting, smelled a rat, and he spake unto the new convert thusly:

"Ananias, is this all the boodle thou got for thy farm?"

And Ananias looked Peter square in the eyes, and said, "Sure, Pete." Thereupon God smote him dead, and some young fellows wrapped him in a blanket and dumped him on the outside.

Then they called in Mrs. Ananias and cross-examined her. And she swore up and down that the money on the table was



all they got for the farm. But all this time she had a wad stuck away down in her stocking, where no one could see it. But the Lord saw it, and he smote her dead also. This is what happened to Christians who refused to divide up when Christianity was still in working order.

Nowadays the preachers explain that Ananias and his old lady were killed because they lied and not because they refused to divide their land. But anybody with a grain of sense ought to know that if folks got killed for lying in business only deaf and dumb people would populate this world.

Yes, the private ownership of land is wrong from the religious standpoint, but if people who claim to be saved don't care a rap for what God says, then what's the use for an ordinary mortal like myself to spring the religious argument against the private ownership of land? It wouldn't cause the most pious land owner on earth to part with enough soil to make a mud pie.

Land is the storehouse of nature, from which mankind draws the material to sustain life. Those who hold the key to this storehouse also hold in their hands the life of those who cannot enter without their permission.

Labor applied to land creates wealth; but those who are denied access to the soil can only create wealth by working for the owner of the land.

Land is the free gift of nature to all her children. If there such a thing as natural right, the right to the use of the land should be foremost. 'But in this world of strife and struggle there is no such a thing as natural right. "Might is right," and for thousands of years the mighty have possessed themselves of the land and used it to oppress and enslave the weak. Even a religion which proclaims the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Men failed to prevent a division of "God's Children" into lords and serfs, landlords and tenants.

As long as our population was small and land practically unlimited landlordism could not develop, for no man will voluntarily work for another for less than he can get by working for himself. But in the course of time the country became more densely populated. A capitalist government, with an eye for the interest of the class it served, presented whole empires to railroad companies. Up to 1896 our benevolent, paternalistic government gave 266,000,000 acres of land to the railroad promoters. The Northern Pacific alone received a grant of forty-eight million acres.

Most of these grants were obtained through fraud, bribery and the corruption of the representatives of the people,

from Presidents and Supreme Court Judges down to State Governors and Assemblymen.

It seems that the sole purpose of all land legislation during the last three quarters of a century was to encourage land-lordism and land speculation and to rob the farming population for the benefit of gigantic corporations. Uncle Sam squandered natural resources like a drunken sailor; or, better, he robbed his nephews and nieces like an unscrupulous guardian to enrich a few of his pets.

All through the northwest we find the railroad corporations selling the land, which Uncle Sam was kind enough to give them for nothing, to subsidiary lumber companies, and with the proceeds thereof built the roads.

These lumber companies barely paid more than a few dollars per acre for the finest timber land in the world, but the price more than paid for the building of the roads. In due time the majestic forest was converted into lumber. The cut and burned-over land, with nothing left on it but the blackened stumps, was sold to settlers for from ten to fifteen dollars per acre. In this ingenious way the farmer was made to pay for the building of roads which were to rob him ever after. Incidentally he also helped the struggling lumber trust to bear the heavy expense entailed in the devastation of our forests.

Even when the government gave the land direct to the settlers under the homestead acts it was more from a desire to furnish freight and passenger traffic for the subsidized roads than to help the farmer to land.

To-day our public domain is a thing of the past, and what little land there is still open for homesteading is too poor to raise a fass on with two Irishmen and a gallon of whisky.

Where other enlightened people have steadily striven towards the abolition of land monopoly, our own government made it easy to monopolize the soil. There is absolutely no limit as to how much of God's earth an individual may hog in the land of the free and the home of the brave. Even foreign landlords have been encouraged to take as much of the pie as desired.

Here, for instance, are a few English beneficiaries of Uncle Sam's generosity:

Earl of Cleveland . . . . .	106,650 acres
Duke of Devonshire . . . . .	148,625 acres
Duke of Northumberland . . . . .	191,460 acres
Byron H. Evans . . . . .	700,000 acres
Duke of Sutherland . . . . .	422,000 acres
Robert Tenant . . . . .	530,000 acres

W. Whaley, M. P. ....	310,000 acres
Mr. Ellerhausen .....	600,000 acres
Baron Tweedale .....	1,700,000 acres

In 1896 six foreign land companies owned twenty-six million acres of this country, or enough to give 140,000 homesteads of 160 acres each. Cutting the homesteads down to eighty acres each, this land would support a farming population of 1,400,000 souls.

Some patriotic souls are bitterly opposed to alien ownership of land, but, to save my soul, I cannot see what difference it makes whether the rack-rent-ridden tenant pays his sweat-stained shekels to the agent of my Lord Tweedledee in St. Louis or to Lawyer Skinnem at the nearest county seat.

If a boy puts a tack on my chair and I sit on it, I am not going to lick the boy because he is Dutch or Irish, but because he put the tack under me. It is not the nationality of the boy that hurts, but the tack, and so it is with landlordism.

The native land hog has been not less enterprising than the foreign breed, and it seems that our homemade trusts have dabbled considerably in the real estate business on the side.

Here are a few trust landlords:

Lumber Trust .....	30,000,000 acres
Standard Oil .....	1,000,000 acres
Leather Trust .....	500,000 acres
Steel Trust, value .....	\$60,000,000

Then there a number of thrifty and frugal individuals, who worked hard and saved still harder, until they acquired farms of such goodly proportions as that one of the late D. C. Murphy of New York, who left 4,000,000 acres of land behind; former United States Senator Farwell of Illinois, who owned 3,000,000; and Henry Miller of California, who to-day is the undisputed lord over 22,500 square miles.

Yes, this is the richest country on earth, and there is enough land for ten times the population we have, but it happens to belong to the fellow who farms the farmer instead of the farmer who farms the farm. There is plenty of air for everybody and some to spare, but if air could be bottled, frozen, packed or monopolized, some captain of industry would choke little meters down our throats and make us cough up a quarter for a day's breathing. And he should not be blamed for it, either, because it is our duty to encourage brain, ability, foresightedness, enterprise and sagacity. Besides, a people who are willing to pay others for the use of God's earth should have no objection to putting up good money for God's air also.

"Ah," you say, "but these people own too much land." Yes, but there is no law on our statute books to prevent one man from hogging the whole blamed country and tell the rest of us to get off the earth. If it is right for one man to deny another man access to the soil, then it is right that he deny ten, hundreds, thousands or millions of people. Besides, you and your dad whooped it up for the politicians who made our land laws, and if you don't like them you have no one to blame but yourselves.

From the foregoing it must not be understood that the farm land is gobbled up by the wise men who run our trusts, railroads, ourselves included. While it is true that some of the great trusts own considerable land, these institutions are satisfied in getting the farm product without owning the farm itself. It is rather the small capitalists in the county seat towns who are getting the farms.

### WHY THE FARMERS LOSE THE SOIL.

Many farmers have landlord heads on farm hand bodies. Instead of seeing themselves in the true light as pure and simple workers, they entertain a hazy notion that the ownership of more or less mortgaged implements, chattels and lands stamps them as capitalists. They do not look upon the soil as a means of production, but as a means of speculation and exploitation. Deep down in the heart of every farmer there is a hope that some day the rise of land values may make a second Rockefeller of him. Some day he hopes to move to town, while a hungry tenant on the old home place supplies him with the necessities and luxuries of life. In other words, he expects to escape the blessings of farm life by becoming an exploiter of his own kind.

Now, some farmers have made money by buying land cheap and selling it high. Many have retired to county seats to spend their declining years in comfort and idleness. Consequently he looks upon rising land values as a great blessing. But while rising land values may be a good thing for land speculators, they are a curse to the actual tillers of the soil.

Let us put it in this way: The same Kansas farm  
 Worth \$ 100 in 1880, produced 2000 bu. of corn, value \$1000  
 Worth \$ 1,000 in 1890, produced 2000 bu. of corn, value \$1000  
 Worth \$ 5,000 in 1900, produced 2000 bu. of corn, value \$1000  
 Worth \$10,000 in 1910, produced 2000 bu. of corn, value \$1000

So you see, while the value of this farm rose from \$100.00 to \$10,000.00, the volume and the value of the crop remained the same; which is not quite true, because land which produced 2000 bushels of corn in 1880 will not produce 2000



bushels of corn in 1910 unless a greater amount of labor is expended, for while land values have steadily gone up, the productivity of the soil has gone down. As long as this farmer works his own land it is immaterial to him whether the land is worth ten cents or ten thousand dollars.

Yes, you see that; but you say: "This farmer bought his farm for \$100.00 in 1880; to-day he can sell it for \$10,000.00 and make a clear profit of \$9,900.00." Admitted; but somebody must have \$10,000.00 before our farmer can get it. Let us say our farmer's name is Tom and the other fellow's name is Dick.

Tom has ..... A farm

Dick has ..... \$10,000.00

Now the two swap, and let's see what happened.

Nothing happened; not a cent of value was created. Instead of Dick eating up his \$10,000.00 in town, Tom is moving to town to do the spending and Dick moves on the farm. The two change positions—that is all. If this changing of land and money has benefited Tom and Dick, then figure it out for me; and if the swapping between Tom and Dick did not make the two any richer than they were before the swap, how on earth is the swapping of all the Toms and Dicks in the country going to benefit the farming class?

If I own a dollar and you own a pup, and I give you a dollar for your pup, how many more dollars and how many more pups have we now? And if we haven't got any more pups and dollars, how much better off are we?

But let us say I am a land speculator and you are a farmer. In 1880 I bought the above-mentioned piece of dirt for \$100.00. The rent has paid all the taxes and 8 per cent on the money invested. For thirty years I have busied myself sitting in the shade waiting for a sucker. Then you come along. Want a farm to raise corn, don't you? and you have \$10,000.00, which means that I get \$9,900 for waiting for you; and you raised 18,800 bushels of corn in the days gone by and turned the money over to me. I, the land speculator, got the savings of your life time and you got a piece of land which was here a couple of millions of years before land speculators ever were invented. Therefore I say again, high land values are of no more benefit to the farmer than high-priced farm implements are to him, for the actual farmer wants land and implements for use and not for speculation.

#### EFFECT OF INHERITANCE.

Now let us put the case differently. Tom, the owner of the aforementioned Kansas farm lives on it until he dies. Of

his five children three have moved to the city. Minnie married a drummer. Joe is pilot of a street car and Jennie is a manicurist on her own hook. Fred and John work the home place. Each one of the five children have a \$2000.00 equity in the farm. Fred and John, the two farmers, borrow \$6000.00 to pay off the three children in the city. To do this they place mortgage on the home place. And now commences a heart-breaking struggle for the two young farmers. The interest amounts to \$360.00 per year at 6 per cent interest. Taxes on a \$10,000.00 farm are not less than \$200.00 per annum. Before these two boys can have a dollar for themselves, they must raise \$560.00 for the banker and the politician. If everything goes well they may be able to pay off that mortgage by the time they are old and gray, after having paid in interest alone three times the value of the place.

But if things go wrong, and they happen to go wrong oftener than they go right, those two boys will have a mortgage foreclosed, and next year they make a share crop on the old homestead.

Half the homes in our towns are built with money scratched out of the soil by the children who remain on the farm, and most of the small merchants buy their first stock of goods with their share of dad's estate. That this share is also scratched out of the soil by Fred and John, the farmers, does not seem to interest anybody in particular. Rising land values and the laws of inheritance are great factors in the transformation of the land-owning farmers into renters.

There are other factors that help along, but this is not an encyclopedia, but a pamphlet, consequently somethings must be left out. I have only touched upon the effect of high land values on the farmer to induce him to shake the capitalist out of his brain tank.

Landlordism is rapidly increasing in the United States since Uncle Sam hasn't any more land to spend, and the best government on earth, while doing nothing against the coming slavery, is at least kind enough to tell us of the progress we are making. Here are a few census figures:

#### Farms Operated by

	Owners. Per cent.	Tenants. Per cent.
1880:.....	74.5	25.5
1890:.....	71.6	28.4
1900:.....	64.7	35.3
1910:.....	62.0	38.0



**Farms Mortgaged.**

1900.....	30.0 per cent
1910.....	33.3 per cent

The complete census figures on farm homes for the census year of 1910 are not available as yet. But they are complete for some states. Among them is Wisconsin. This state boasts of a large German population, known for its thrift and frugality. If this class of farmers are losing their hold on the soil and are rapidly drifting towards tenantry, then we may safely assume that the same transformation is taking place all over the country. As a matter of fact, tenantry in the Southern States is increasing at a terrific rate. Oklahoma, for instance, which was thrown open for settlement in 1889, has over 92,000 farm tenants to-day. But let us return to the thrifty, cornfed farmer of Wisconsin and learn what is happening to him.

**THE MORTGAGED BADGER FARMER.**

Brother farmer, I want you to sit down and do some hard figuring. Over one-half of all the farms of Wisconsin are mortgaged. Your place may still be unincumbered, but since the percentage of mortgaged farms is steadily increasing you may be the next one to put a plaster on your place.

	No. mort- gaged farms.	Per cent mortgaged farms.
1890.....	55,242	42.9
1900.....	65,589	45.8
1910.....	72,129	51.1

According to the foregoing figures, the relative number of farms operated by their owners which are mortgaged has increased quite regularly since 1890. From 1890 to 1910 the number increased 21,887, or 39.6 per cent.

From the above it may be easily seen that as a class you are getting more and more in debt. A mortgage is anything but a sign of prosperity. But wait, the worst is yet to come.

**Average Mortgage Debt Per Farm Increase.**

1890.....	\$1,001	
1910.....	2,116	111.3 per cent

So we see that in twenty years the mortgaged farms increased 39.6 per cent, while the mortgaged indebtedness increased 111.8 per cent. Or, to put it differently, in 1890 the farmers of Wisconsin paid interest on a debt of \$55,305,000. In 1910 they paid interest on \$146,815,000.

All this looks bad for the Wisconsin farmers, and the census man, not wishing to cast a gloom over the prosperity-

blessed Badger State, produced another array of figures, which show that while the farmers are getting in debt more and more they are becoming richer at the same time.

The wealth of the farmer, we are told, is accumulating in the form of land values. The census states that while the mortgaged indebtedness increased 111.8 per cent land values increased 105.0 per cent in twenty years. But what the census man fails to prove is that the increase of land values is a benefit to the farmer who farms the farm.

### The Fetish of Land Values.

The average value of land and buildings, per acre, was:

1850.....	\$ 9.58
1860.....	16.61
1870.....	20.51
1880.....	23.30
1890.....	28.44
1900.....	34.54
1910.....	57.06

That's going some. "Getting richer all the time," you say. Now let me ask you a few questions.

If an acre of land, valued at \$9.58 in 1850, produced 50 bushels of corn, how many bushels will it produce in 1910, when its value has gone up to \$57.06?

If an acre of land worth \$16.61 in 1870 pastured two cows, how many cows will the same acre pasture in 1910 after its value has reached \$57.06 ?

The result of your meditation and calculation will be that while land values have increased, the productivity of the land has remained almost the same. And if with the same expenditure of labor you cannot get a bigger crop on a fifty dollar acre than you got on the same acre when it cost only ten dollars, how on earth is the rise of land values benefitting the actual tiller of the soil. Does the farmer draw interest on the value of his land ?

When figuring your yearly income do you state

Value of land, \$10,000.	6 per cent interest on same..	\$600
Value of crop ..		\$800

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Total income ..... \$1400

Or do you put it this way—

Value of crop .....	\$800
Taxes on \$10,000 farm .....	70

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Net income .. ..... \$730

When you look at it in the right light you will find that land values are a liability instead of an asset to the farmer who farms the farm. Rising land values may increase your taxes, but they don't increase the product of the land.

### Tenant Farming.

The landlord robs the tenant and the tenant robs the soil. The result is an impoverished rural population and an impoverished soil. Landlordism is a curse, whether we find it in India, Ireland or Wisconsin. It produces miserable farm homes, overworked women, and underschooled children. Schools, churches and homes go down in the country and a non-producing, non-progressing parasite class composed of tired and retired farmers hang around the county seat towns like flies around the bungholes of molasses barrels.

Landlordism is a survival of Lordism or Feudalism. The landlord is a parasite without an extenuating circumstance. In the scheme of life he fulfills no useful function. He is to agriculture what the mistletoe is to the tree. The rent money that flows from the farm to the towns is a fearful drain on the actual tillers of the soil. He finds himself short of the capital required for the purchase of the best farm animals and implements. Every improvement made in soil culture or by more scientific management is absorbed by the landlord in ever rising rent.

The division of the farming class into landlords and landtillers, exploiter and exploited, produces the same effect noticed in the separation of ownership and labor in modern industrial life. The tenant as his brother the wage worker will retain from the product of his toil only sufficient to keep himself in working condition. The surplus above the existence wage is confiscated by the landlord even as the capitalist confiscates the surplus value produced by the wage worker.

Tenantry did not increase at the fearful rate as mortgaged indebtedness did in Wisconsin. But it does increase faster than the new farms cut out of the jungle have increased.

On the whole it may be said that the higher the land values, the denser the population and the older the settlement the greater is the number of tenants. The greatest percentage of tenants is found in the southern counties of the state. Tenantry gradually disappears as we move north toward the sparsely settled jungle. From this it may be deducted that if tenantry rises with age and land values, the northern part of Wisconsin will produce a lusty crop of renters as soon as the land has reached a state of cultivation where it will support two men—landlord and renter. Up to the present time

the cheap land of the state has proven the only hindrance to the extension of landlordism. With the disappearance of free or cheap land, tenantry is bound to grow rapidly in the state, says the census man.

### Farm Tenure — 1880-1910.

The following table shows the status of farm tenure by decades since 1880.

#### Farms operated by tenants:

		Per Cent
1880 .....	12,159 or	9.1
1890 .....	16,728 or	11.4
1900 .....	22,996 or	13.5
1910 .....	24,659 or	13.9

#### Farms operated by owners:

1880.....	122,163
1890.....	129,681
1900.....	146,799
1910.....	152,473

In thirty years the number of tenants doubled in the state. Tenantry increased 102.8 per cent, while the farms operated by their owners only increased 24.8 per cent. The latter increase is almost exclusively due to the reclamation of cut over land by the pioneer farmers.

### The Sunny South.

From damp and cold Wisconsin let us turn towards the sunny South and see how much sunshine we find for the Southern farmer in the census report of 1910. Complete figures for the South Central division comprising the states of Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma and Texas are now available. The figures show—

#### Mortgaged farms operated by their owners:

1900.....	138,856 or	17 per cent
1910.....	246,048 or	26 per cent

#### Farms operated by tenants:

1900.....	805,546 or	49 per cent
1910 .....	1,024,265 or	52 per cent

To be sure, land values rose 133 per cent during the same period but it remains to be proven whether or not rising land values benefit the farmer who farms the farm.

As a glaring example of the blessing (?) of rising land values we may point to the conditions in Oklahoma. In that state land values increased 333 per cent from 1900 to 1910. At the same time the number of farm tenants rose from 47,250 to 103,753.

In 1900, 92 per cent of the farms operated by their owners were owned free of indebtedness. Ten years later and after an increase of 333 per cent in the value of land only 58 per cent of the same farms remained unmortgaged.

### The New Feudalism.

The same economic forces which have separated the mechanic from the ownership of his tools are even now robbing the farmer of the ownership of the soil.

The privately owned farm gives to the operating owner the product of his toil, but when the farm passes into the hands of a non-farming landlord, it becomes a means of depriving the farmer of the product of his labor.

Owned by the farmer, the soil is a means of production. Owned by the landlord it is a means of exploitation. In agriculture we find the same transformation from private to capitalist owned property as observed in industry.

But let us ask the question, is this transformation in the direction of social production, and consequently towards social ownership? Are the capitalists buying up the soil to repeat in agriculture the same magnificent process witnessed in the development of capitalist production? How long will it be before we see the farmer reduced to a wage worker, toiling on gigantic farms under the direction of hired managers, scientists and soil experts for the benefit of absentee stockholders?

To all these questions there can be but one answer, and that is the evolution in agriculture is not towards social production and capitalist ownership. Instead of striving forward towards capitalism, we are really returning toward feudalism.

The farmers are losing the land to the capitalists. The separation between ownership and labor is taking place, but the farmer is not entering a higher stage of production as a wage worker, but is cast into a lower one—tenantry.

If the Census figures prove anything then it is that there is no tendency towards bonanza farming in this country. The size of the average farm is remaining practically stationary, and the number of capitalist farms operated by managers is actually decreasing.

Average number of acres per farm:

Year	Number of acres per farm
1850.....	202
1860.....	199
1870.....	153
1880.....	133
1890.....	136
1900.....	146
1910.....	138



## Farms operated by managers:

1900.....	59,085
1910.....	57,398

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Decrease 1,687

The whole movement is reactionary, away from progress toward feudalism. Here we have much land owned by one landlord and tilled by many tenant families.

Not let us separate the syllable Land, from Lord, retaining Lord alone; let us substitute serf for tenant, and we have in name what we have in reality—Feudalism.

Under feudalism the Lord took about one-third of the product of the serf. The modern landlord, thanks to the introduction of farm machinery, takes one-half of the crop produced by the tenant; and yet there are people who regard Landlordism as an improvement on plain Lord-ism.

While the county seat usurers, bankers and small fry capitalists are gleefully returning to the good old days when "Knighthood Was In Flower," the real capitalists have taken up a stragetic position and placed themselves in possession of the faucet through which the agricultural products flow into the world's markets.

Grain elevators, flour mills, cotton gins, packing plants, canning factories and market facilities are all the property of the greater capitalists. The possession of these means of production and distribution makes it possible for this class to take from the farmer all he produces. leaving only sufficient to allow him to reproduce his labor power and raise a new generation of farmers.

The farmer selling into and buying out of a monopolized market, finds himself in the identical position of the wage worker who sells his labor power under free competition with his fellow workers to the owners of capital. The only difference is that the wage worker sells his labor power direct to the capitalist while the farmer converts his labor power into products which he cannot turn into cash without first passing through the fingers of the gentlemen who cluster around the faucet.

The pay envelope of the factory worker must contain the price which he must pay to the landlord for the use of a town lot, and the price of farm produce must be high enough to allow the farmer a sum large enough to pay land rent and sustain life.

In both cases the landlord appears as a pure parasite on industrial capitalist. The abolition of landlordism in the cities would undoubtedly result in an immediate benefit to the work-



ing class, but in the long run this benefit would be benevolently assimilated by the industrial capitalists. The same is true in regard to landlordism in the farming regions. But it is further true that wherever the workers have succeeded in raising their standard of living they will resist bitterly being reduced to the former standard. This undoubtedly would intensify the class struggle and ultimately result in a stronger and more militant working class.

The Socialists could not and would not hinder the development of the trust.

The Socialists could not and would not hinder the development of capitalist farming. But if there is a tendency toward bonanza farming in this country it has escaped the most careful observers.

Two things are absolutely clear. The ratio of farm owners tilling their own soil is decreasing all over the United States.

The amount of land cultivated by the individual farmer is becoming less.

The machinery required for the marketing of farm products is in the hands of the capitalists. Nowhere do we find the remotest sign of capitalist farming: So far not even the partnership, the lowest form of capitalist association, has developed on the farm.

In seeking a solution of the agricultural problem, we must cease to wander about in the realm of speculation, hunting cures for the ills of phantoms created by ourselves. We must get down to actual facts.

In order that a farmer may farm he must have:

First, land;

Second, tools, machinery, animals, or in other words, capital;

Third, means of bringing his product to the ultimate consumer without the intervention of the capitalist.

### Land.

The land question may be solved through a system of taxation which would make renting of land unprofitable. By forcing the owners of rented land and idle land held for the rise of land values, to pay a higher rate of taxation than is paid by the farmer who tills his own soil, the land will naturally revert to the actual user of the soil. This elimination of the parasite landlord and speculator depends entirely on the degree of taxation. A tax that would equal the full rental value of the land would amount to the same thing as confiscation by society.

## Capital.

The nationalization of the banking system, loaning money at actual cost, would give capital to the usury ridden farmer at a rate that would be lower than his greatest expectations.

The national, state and municipal ownership of railroads, packing plants, canning factories, grain elevators, cotton gins, market facilities and so forth, would finally relieve the farmer from exploitation through the private ownership of these, the greater means of production and distribution.

The ultimate goal of Socialism is to give to the worker the product of his labor.

As a means to this end we demand the common ownership of the things that can be used as a means of exploitation.

Most farmers imagine that the private ownership of the farm is the only thinkable arrangement by which they can obtain the product of their labor. But this is not the case. THE RIGHT TO THE USE OF THE LAND WILL INSURE THE PRODUCT TO THE PRODUCER AS EFFECTUALLY AS OUTRIGHT OWNERSHIP.

We do not have to own a school house to give education to our children. The common owned street or county road allows us to move about as freely as if we had a title deed to those things.

What we do need though is the right to the use of the school, the roads and the streets.

Land is not used in common like a factory or railroad and yet it may be used as a means of exploitation. A farm owned by one man and operated by another will give to the idle owner the surplus produced by the tenant as effectually as if the same farm were operated by wage workers under the direction of a hired manager.

Since land is limited, it can become monopolized and the ownership of many farms by a few owners and filled individually by a great number of tenant families must result in the enslavement of the landless workers.

## The Remedy.

We have now a fair diagnosis of the case of the farmer. He is a cruelly exploited being. Parasites of all kinds and descriptions feed on his body. Usurers, landlords, speculators and capitalists rob him of the fruit of his labor. How can Doctor Socialist help the farmer?

In promulgating a farmers' program the socialists have the choice between three policies:

First, they may prolong the life of the small, isolated and individually worked farm through land legislation, along the

lines laid down by Henry George and through the nationalization of credit. In doing this the union between ownership and labor will be preserved in the farming industry. But we are also perpetrating a system of production which, although just from the viewpoint of distribution, is undesirable from the standpoint of production.

Second, the Socialists may keep their hands off, allowing the capitalists to organize agriculture on a capitalist basis or to reduce the farmers to feudal serfs.

Third, they may place a check to the expropriation of the farming class by the capitalists, while at the same time open a way for the development of co-operative farming and the gradual nationalization of the land.

The Socialist Party of Oklahoma, composed almost exclusively of farmers, has worked out a program along these latter lines. The program was adopted by the overwhelming vote of actual farmers three years ago and up to the present time has remained unamended.

I do not claim that it is perfect or that other states with different conditions should adopt it without change, but it is a program that nearly every level headed farmer will accept. It is progressive and tends in the direction of increased productivity and the collective ownership of the means of life, without threatening the actual tiller of the soil with the loss of his land. I herewith submit it to the earnest consideration of the farmers and Socialists of other states:

## **FARMERS' PROGRAM.**

### **Art. 1**

The retention and constant enlargement of the public domain:

By retaining school and other public lands.

By purchase of arid and overflow lands and the state reclamation of all such lands now held by the state or that may be acquired by the state.

By the purchase of all lands sold for the non-payment of taxes.

By the purchase of segregated and unallotted Indian lands.

By the retention of leased lands after the expiration of leases and the payment of the improvements thereon at an appraised valuation.

### **Art. 2.**

Separation of the department of agriculture from the political government by means of—

Election of all members and officers of the Board of Agriculture by the direct vote of the actual farmers.

Introduction of the merit system among the employees.

**Art. 3.**

Erection by the state of grain elevators and warehouses for the storage of farm products; these elevators and warehouses to be managed by the Board of Agriculture.

**Art. 4.**

Organization by the Board of Agriculture of free agricultural education and the establishment of model farms.

**Art. 5.**

Encouragement by the Board of Agriculture of co-operative societies of farmers—

For the buying of seed and fertilizer.

For the purchase and common use of implements and machinery.

For the preparing and sale of produce.

For the working of land by groups.

**Art. 6.**

Organization by the state for loans on mortgages and warehouse certificates, the interest charges to cover cost only.

**Art. 7.**

State insurance against diseases of animals, diseases of plants, insect pests, hail, flood, storm and fire.

**Art. 8.**

Aid and encouragement to be given the actual workers of the farms in the formation of district co-operative associations which shall be given the power to issue bonds for the purchase of suitable farming lands—bonds to be redeemable in forty years. Individuals purchasing such lands shall pay the purchase price of land in share or cash annual or semi-annual rentals extending over a period of forty years, or may at their option pay in full in any given number of years.

**Art. 9.**

Exemption from taxation and execution of dwellings, tools, farm animals, implements and improvements to the amount of one thousand dollars.

**Art. 10.**

A graduated tax on the value of rented land and land held for speculation.

**Art. 11.**

Absentee landlords to assess their own lands, the state reserving the right to purchase such land at their assessed value plus 10 per cent.

**Art. 12.**

Land now in the possession of the state or hereafter acquired through purchase, reclamation or tax sales to be rented to landless farmers under the supervision of the Board of Agri-

culture at the prevailing rate of share rent or its equivalent. The payment of such rent to cease as soon as the total amount of rent paid is equal to the value of the land and the tenant thereby acquires for himself and his children the right of occupancy. The title to all such lands remaining with the commonwealth.

### **The Farmers' Program,**

adopted by the National Convention of the Socialist Party in 1912:

1. The Socialist party demands that the means of transportation and storage and the plants used in the manufacture of farm products and farm machinery shall be socially owned and democratically managed.

2. To prevent the holding of land out of use and to eliminate tenantry, we demand that all farm land not cultivated by owners shall be taxed at its full rental value, and that actual use and occupancy shall be the only title to land.

3. We demand the retention by the national, state or local governing bodies of all land owned by them, and the continuous acquirement of other land by reclamation, purchase, condemnation, taxation or otherwise; such land to be organized as rapidly as possible into socially operated farms for the conduct of collective agricultural enterprises.

4. Such farms should constitute educational and experimental centers for crop culture, the use of fertilizers and farm machinery and distributing points for improved seeds and better breeds of animals.

5. The formation of co-operative associations for agricultural purposes should be encouraged.

6. Insurance against diseases of animals and plants, insect pests and natural calamities should be provided by national, state or local governments.

7. We call attention to the fact, that the elimination of farm tenantry and the development of socially owned and operated agriculture will open new opportunities to the agricultural wage-worker and free him from the tyranny of the private employer.

### **Conclusion.**

The Socialist party is the party of the working class of which the farmer who farms is an important division. The ultimate goal of Socialism is to insure to every worker the product of his labor. All wealth is created by labor. This being true, all wealth should belong to its creator. The reason why this is not the case at present is because the means of production belong not to the worker, but to the capitalist. To



give to the worker the fruit of his labor he must own the means of production, and since the modern means of production are used socially or in common, they must be owned socially and in common. But mark well—the Socialists do not demand the common ownership of all property. They do not ask for the public ownership of private property. Only such property as is now used by one class to exploit another class is to become common property.

The Socialists do not intend to take the farm from the farmer who farms the farm; but on the contrary to see that the actual tiller of his soil may receive the use of the land without paying tribute to landlord or land speculator, or any other owner of the tools of production, such as railroads, packing houses mills, factories and mines.

Neither are such means of production that are privately used to become public property.

The farmer may own his own private smoke house, but the packing plant must belong to all. The farmer may retain the private ownership of his farm implements, but the implement factory must be commonly owned. He also may retain as private property anything and everything that is not used to deprive another man of the product of his labor. This includes homes, automobiles, carriages, diamonds, dogs, horses, cows, clothing, pianos, jewsharps, mules, goats, cats, churns, cream separators, plows, harrows, reapers and rat traps. In short anything that is not used to skin the other fellow.

Brother farmer, the Socialist program points the way to deliverance from Landlord, Speculator, Usurer and Parasite. Get into the Socialist party and vote for your wife and child, and the full product of your labor.

The End.



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